

Don: Political activities disruptive to studies

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KUCHING: It is alright for university students to adopt ideologies of political party they favour, but there is a limit to it in order to keep the campus free from political activities which can disrupt the peaceful environment and change the characters of the students involved.

This was pointed out by Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Student Affairs and Alumni) of Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS) Professor Mohd Fadzil bin Abdul Rahman during a media conference to announce that former Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad had consented to become the Patron of UNIMAS alumni at the university campus in Kota Samarahan near here yesterday.

"I am sure UNIMAS students are mature enough and will not bring in political campaigns or activities into the campus unlike some public universities in the country.

"There are sometimes, minor issues which can just be solved internally and amicably without the involvement of political parties.

"We are in a better position

to deal with any matter or issue concerning our students. I am aware that some of our students are involved in political activities but they are not showing it openly. This can be seen in their postings in Facebook or Twitter," Fadzil said.

He also pointed out that UNIMAS does not forced its students to stay out of politics as it their rights but they are not allowed to bring their political agenda or activities into the university and banned from recruiting members.

"It is different outside the campus as the students do them in their own time.

"If the university management forced them to follow the rules against their will it will make things worse. They will rebel," he said.

It was understood that UNIMAS acknowledged and respect personal rights as long as it does not disrupt peace in the campus.

"We try to reason with them because what is of utmost importance is that they attend classes and perform well in their studies," he said, adding that UNIMAS has integrity and a place to open up the minds of its students so that they will know



PROF Mohd Fadzil (centre) during the media conference yesterday.

between reality and ideology.

"The government is subsidising each student more than RM10,000 per semester while they only have to pay around RM1,000 per semester. It would be a waste of time and resources

if the students failed in their studies due to their involvement in politics.

"As students their job is not to get involved in politics. They are here to study and contribute to the society in the future," he

stressed.

As patron of UNIMAS Alumni, Tun Dr Mahathir had set a condition whereby UNIMAS cannot make use of his name to gain support for the university's purposes.